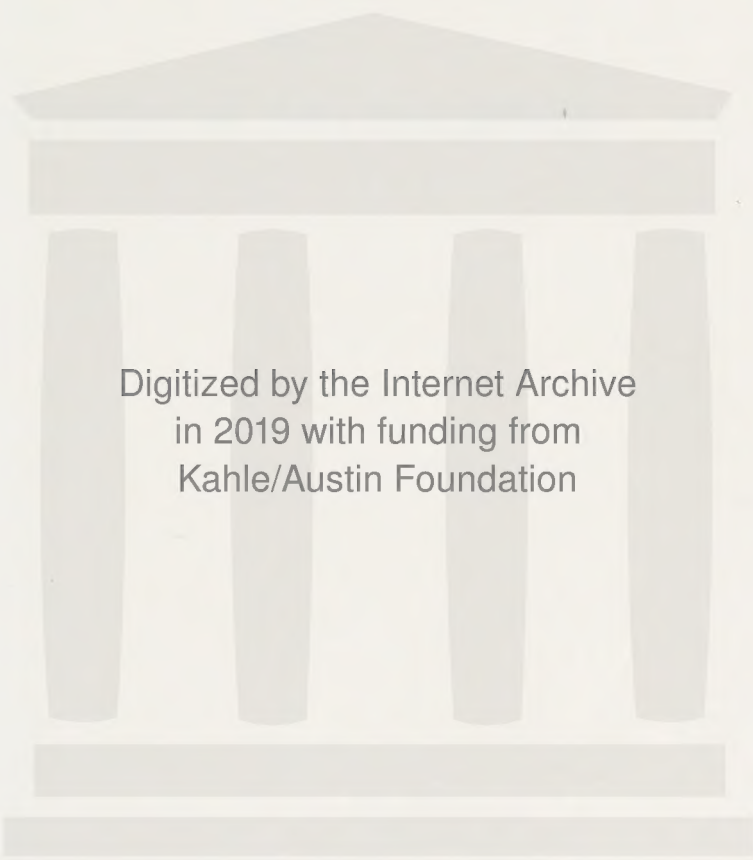


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1850

" GRANNIE'S TWILIGHT VERSES "

by

CATHERINE SAUNDERSON

CHRISTMAS

1926

EDITH OUTRAM RENOUF

MONTREAL

East University Library
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MY INNERMOST HEART

Oh Soul, when this body you leave to soar
To those realms whence you came,
Take with you I pray thee a friend,
My best friend, one always the same;
A friend so responsive, so true,
That thrills with each thought of my mind,
In my sorrow so quiet, so sad,
In my joy so triumphant, so glad,
My innermost heart !

We may hide both our sorrow and pain,
From our nearest and dearest on earth;
Our eyes may be brimful of tears
While we make them believe it is mirth.
In fact, we appear what we're not
And stifle each sigh with a smile,
While our little friend hidden within
Is quivering with pain all the while,
True innermost heart.

Our limbs shake and quake as we age,
Our frame may be bent as with shame,
Our friends pass us by with a nod or a sigh,
But our innermost heart beats the same;
So, Soul, when I pass thro the dark
To meet you again in the light,
Let my heart—in your charge—be the first to await,
And let longing be changed into sight,
Of my innermost heart.

MY VIOLET FRIEND

A violet wild looked up and smiled
At me, from a dear one's grave,
It had come afar, thro the gates ajar,
A message to give—and to crave.

The message that came thro the golden gate
Was of love, and of joy, and of rest,
Of the days all so fair—no sorry night there,
In the home of the ransomed and blest.

And my little friend told of the streets of gold,
Of choirs, and of music and light,
Of harmonies grand filling all the glad land
With praise of God's glory and might;

Told of tears that are shed for sorrow or sin
Are caught by an Angel hand,
And to dew drops distilled—every flower is filled
With their fragrance that perfumes the land.

But my message most sweet I must lay at your feet
Betimes e'er my course is run,
How your love will await at the pearly gate
For you—when your work is done.

And I a message must needs send back,
That the old love planted here,
Is growing fourfold thro winter and cold,
Though watered by many a tear.

Then my little friend said, with the sweetest of
smiles,
As my message it took to its heart,
Love I brought from Heaven—Love I take to
Heaven;
Ah ! well I have played my part.

So it bowed its head o'er the breast of my dead,
And I looked toward the setting sun,
And could almost see thro those hazy hues,
The return of the wandering one.

Ere I turned me away to the city grey,
Come again sweet flower I said,
To this lovely place on the mountain's face,
The home of our quiet dead.

When the waiting is o'er at the pearly door,
No message to come or to send,
We shall look for and find midst the countless ones
there
Our blue eyed wild violet friend.

MINISTERING ANGELS

In the hush and still of midnight,
When sleep from mine eyelids hath fled,
I am not alone but surrounded
By those whom the world calls dead.

One touches my heart to encourage,
One presses my brow to inspire,
One places the white cord of faith in my hand
To draw me up higher and higher.

And the very air of my chamber
Is filled with an ecstasy sweet,
Fair token of what lies beyond the veil
When face to face we meet.

For there is no death but a passing
From earth's sphere to a higher plane,
When the dust returns to Mother earth,
And God claims the spirit again.

For a misty veil only divides us
From those on Eternity's shore
Who are happy in ministering to us
Till we join them for evermore.

So sometime when into earth's shadow
They are passing from heavenly view,
The one at the gate will whisper
Tonight "Bring her back with you."

TO MY VOICE

A precious gift the Master gave, a thing of heavenly
birth,
More prized by me than riches great, or hidden
gems of earth,
Tho' only loaned to me awhile, as years on earth
roll on
Again in heaven I'll find my gift, the precious gift
of Song.

Which mañy and many a time has soothed a tired
aching brain,
And brought forgetfulness awhile in calm and quiet
strain;
Or, when in old Cathedral grand, my voice raised
true and clear,
My soul was well rewarded by the mourner's silent
tear;

Or when in sounds symphonious it told the story true
Of love triumphing over all—a story old as new—
I loved my gift most humbly and in my inmost heart
I dread almost those old grey days when it and I
must part.

* * * *

My gift of song is going back to heaven from whence
it came,

But every grand old song I've sung will know me
 once again,
When floating thro' ethereal space on Music's wings
 I rise,
Each song a spirit form will take and "waft me thro'
 the skies".

And Angels ever bright and fair, all clad in robes
 of white,
Will "take me" thro' the valley dark, into the glorious
 light
Of the eternal choirs—where the Lost Chord is
 found,
And allelujahs loud and long thro' heavenly domes
 resound.

And music sweet and low as sweet sweeps o'er the
 scented plane,
And out from those sweet harmonies comes forth
 my voice again
To welcome me and be the crown my Lord has given
 for this,
That while I sang I also prayed the glory might be
 His.

Then shall I see, as now I know that my Redeemer
 liveth,
That every good and gracious gift that He bestows
 He giveth
To us to nourish and as sacred charge to hold,
Which used aright, in Heaven's light He will return
 fourfold.

FLOWERS LIVE TO DIE — MAN DIES TO LIVE

The flowers we planted in Mother earth
Are coming from winter's care,
To gladden our sight with their beauty again,
And perfume the soft summer air.

The flowers which we have in God's acre laid
Have risen from out the gloom,
And the perfume of memory in our hearts
Tells in Paradise they bloom.

The flowers we hold in our hands today
Will wither away, ah, me !
But the flowers which we give into God's own hand
Will bloom thro Eternity.

AT TWILIGHT IN MOUNT ROYAL

Again I seek my mountain spot,
Apart from all the world of busy mortals;
I cannot understand their lothness
To accompany me to these fair acres of a loving God
So bright the flowers, so sweet the trill of birdlings
 overhead,
So still the air, so green the sod,
And you, dear friends, you do not urge to stay
Or come again, but let me come and go at my sweet
 will;
And for that reason do I will to often come
And join your silent company.

And so I rest beside you on the cool earth's breast,
And think and pray—yes, in the prayer and thinking
Ye are with me always—but in the resting, ah ! there
Methinks ye have the best of our communing;
But I do close mine eyes, shut out the time and place
And back we are together face to face amid, per-
 chance,
The loving pleasures of a Christmastide,
And we have spent full many side by side
And at the recollection of some merry time my laugh
 rings out.

And time and place forgot, we happy are again,
And clasp each others' hands and swear the truest
Love and friendship until death—death, ah, yes, 'tis
 here;

I start and ope mine eyes to see a passer-by
Arrested by my merry tone in this a place so sad.
What was he said ?—"Her grief hath made her
mad."

Not so kind friend, this cannot be the place to grieve,
Because we leave and find them here again in calm
repose,

But when we turn us back into the city grey,
And miss them from their own accustomed place,
Then is the time to look our sorrow in the face,
Be brave and see that as our day our strength shall
be.

Now all but I from out this place have gone,
And so dear ones adieu or rather au revoir,
For I shall come again as heretofore
To hold communion sweet with you. I must away
The sun has fallen some time behind your western
mount,

And yes the stars are coming—one—two—three—
To guard and keep you nightly company.
And list, a low sweet breeze sings out from yonder
sky,

Your evening hymn God's lullaby—
'Tis time to kiss the cold, cold stone,
And wander forth to life and work alone;
For drowsy dusk her mantle spreads o'er hill and dell,
Ah ! Luna comes to light me home,
Good night—good night—sleep well.

THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

Let not your hearts then troubled be,
Thou toilers in the dust;
Why seek in vain without My aid
The pathway of the just ?
Lift up thine eyes, stretch forth thine hand.
Believe and thou shalt see,
By grace of God that thou hast made
Companionship with Me.

I am the way.

Let not your heart be troubled then
Thou who would'st wiser be
Than sage—philosopher, or Saint,
But learn the truth from me.
Search well what Holy Writ doth tell
Of Wisdom's fruitful tree,
By prayer and faith, climb higher still,
And follow on and see

I am the truth.

Let not your heart then troubled be,
Thou who would'st fain lay down
The weary burden of thy life,
Without thy cross—no crown.
But be thou faithful unto death,
Keep firm thro all the strife
The way—the Truth will lead thee on
To the Eternal Life.

I am the Life.

FROM COUNTRY TO TOWN

From the city's dull glare to the country I roam,
On a mission of hope, joy and care;
My Mission complete I may turn tired feet
Again to the comforts of home,
A drive I must take thro the cold winter night,
To the station so lone on the hill,
Through pure fields of snow lightened by Luna's
 glow,
A grandly pure glorious sight.
By the station's dim light, of a friend not a trace,
At the end of the platform I stand,
Not a sound to be heard, pure winter had bound
Every sound in her silent embrace.

The silence enthralled me, yet no fear appalled me,
But only a nearness to those who had gone on before
To that far distant shore—there seemed nothing
Betwixt me and God.
A glare thro' the pines—a rush o'er the lines,
Again in the City's bright light, where all
Was so changed—the pure snow soiled and stained
By the traffic of feet hurrying on down the street
On errand of Mercy or pain; but, thank God,
Even night has its hours of delight—
And happy throngs too pass me by,
Throwing off the day's care they are out in God's air,
To forget there is sorrow or sigh.
The journey of life when it comes to an end,
The last station within reach I see,
May I lift my glad eyes to those star bedecked skies,
And find nothing betwixt God and me.

TRUANT LOVE

A woman's heart is a curious thing;
All full of little chambers within,
Where she stores her treasures her smiles and her
joys,
To hide them away from that troublesome boy
Called Cupid.

He likes to hide in a deep recess,
But oh ! he gets things into dire distress
When he opes the door of the innermost core,
And lets Love depart to roam o'er and o'er
This hard cold world.

But Love thinks the world the very best place
For him to dwell, and he means to taste all its joys,
For he thinks he has only to wink
To have every one kneel at his feet—poor boy.

So he finds himself soon at an office door,
Where a merchant is gathering his wealth—galore;
With a saucy smile he makes himself known,
But surely that face is cut out of stone
That looks him all o'er.

And politely tells that Love is old fashioned,
No call for it now, for something that's yellow
And hard, and cold, has quite taken the place
Of the love of old;
Love shivers and thinks this is quite the wrong
Place for him to have shown his poor little face.

So a little crestfallen he beats a retreat,
And aimlessly roams toward a meadow sweet,
Where children are playing, and here for a while
He is petted, and fed, and made to feel
That child's love for Love is very real.
But passing by is a vision rare
Of a dainty maiden, Oh ! so fair
That sunbeams entangle themselves in her hair,
And the ether blue from the summer skies
Repeats itself in her azure eyes.

Now Love, the fickle, takes his flight,
To try his wiles on this vision in white,
He kneels at her feet, looks up in her eyes,
And breathes one or two most desperate sighs,
While she in her turn looks him o'er and o'er,

And is sure in her heart she has seen him before,
She gives him a pat and a smile or two,
Which thrills him with rapture thro' and thro';
But looking down at her hands so fair,
She discovers the glitter of jewels there,
Which reminds her that love is a tiresome thing,
Whose ambition is bound by a plain gold ring,
So withdrawing herself with stately grace,
And looking poor Love direct in the face,
Tells—that fashion, ambition and jewels and gold
Have quite taken the place of the love of old.

Now Love by this time begins to see,
The world is not quite what he thought it to be,
And fain would return to the heart of the maid
Who had cherished young Love, but is sadly afraid,
Midst the din and confusion of hurry and sound,
The heart of the maiden will never be found;
But a gentle touch and a low breathed sigh
Makes him feel and know that some one is nigh
Who'll forgive and forget, and he turns to see
The maiden there, and on bended knee
He sues for pardon, and repentant owns,
He never a happy moment has known,
Since he from her gentle heart has flown,
Excepting—the hour when the soft wind fanned
The happy children in meadow land.

Now taking him up in her arms so fair,
She grieves at seeing a stain here and there,
Which she washes away with a tear or two,
And tucks him into her heart anew,
And makes him promise, there and then,
That he'd never be tempted to wander again,
Till the Prince of Truth, with love in his hand,
Comes to claim them both for Happy land;
And love feeling sweet content again,
Simply bows his head and whispers—Amen.

THE RACE OF LIFE

Four goodly men and true start out on the race of
life,

With never a doubt within them but they'll conquer
in the strife,

Do they know that around and about them good
angels watch and pray,

And reach out hands to help them keep the straight
and narrow way.

Do they see at the goal they are travelling to the
shining throngs who await,

To welcome them after their toilsome way which
ends at the golden gate ?

Do they hear the flutter of angel wings applauding
a steady pace ?

Do they feel the breath of an Angel's sigh when they
loiter or lag in the race ?

The first man starts with a purpose fixed with loyal
flag unfurled,

Naught daunted by the pleasures or the trials of
this world ;

With steadfast eye upon the goal to which his soul
would rise,

His course is straight—when tempter comes he all
his wiles defies.

The second starts a winning race so blythe and sure
is he,
That he sees not the trap of the wary one till down
on bended knee,
He has tripped o'er the flowers of pleasure and
looking around descries
The others gone on without him, and he makes no
effort to rise.

But e'en in the midst of his pleasures he feels a
sting in his soul,
But he smiles and says, I suppose this is only paying
toll;
The prick I feel from the flowers is the thorn in the
rose I fear,
Ah, no poor deluded mortal, 'tis the smart of an
Angel's tear !

Now the third looking over his shoulder at the one
so soon lost from the race,
Thinks how some men pander to pleasure 'tis really
a sorry disgrace,
And he sees not the barrier ambition looming ugly
and back in his way.
Till, in reaching to climb it, he stumbles and in
stumbling blots out every ray.

Of faith and of love and contrition seeing only deep
 ugly despair,
Not catching the whisper of Angels that floats on the
 soft summer air,
But hearing the words of derision breathed by
 worldings regardless of pain,
He leaps o'er the hedge into darkness, and angels
 weep o'er the self-slain.

Now what of the fourth, where is he and doth he
 not try for the prize ?
Ah ! yes and as oft as he falleth as often again doth
 he rise ;
He has loitered in pleasures' byways, he has knocked
 at ambition's door,
Is weary of fighting temptations, is heart sick and
 often soul sore.

But the angels draw closer and closer when "forgive"
 they so often hear,
And the seventy times seven they whisper falls sweet
 on his listening ear.
Soon a feeling of triumph comes o'er him and he
 casts away sorrow and care,
And clutches the rope which the angels give—each
 strand bears a mother's prayer.

And lo, and behold, he is close at the goal and all
the rough places seem plain,

And every temptation has vanished and only his
good deeds remain,

And he meets right here at the Gateway the
“faithful” the first in the race,

Who oft might have given a willing hand to help
o’er some deep ugly place !

Now he hears but the rustle of angel wings, and the
shouts of the angel throng,

Who rejoice at return of the wandering one as they
sing the victor’s song ;

So together they halt at the golden gate “neck and
neck”, and hand in hand,

Together the “faithful” and sorely-tried-one pass
into the Golden Land.

OUR BOYS

Out on the fair fields of sunny old France,
The home of the light heart, song, laughter and
dance,

The men of an Empire stand fit for the fight,
With eyes on the motto "For God and the Right".

And the whole of old Britain throbs as one heart,
Knowing well how her brave sons are playing their
part,

While rejoicing in victory, she shivers with pain,
And bowing her proud head, she weeps for the slain.

But cheer up old England, who are these just in
sight.

With eyes on the enemy, keen for the fight,
With hearts true as steel—yea dauntless and more ?
Why these are your grandsons from Canada's shore.

They have come from the home nest the mart and
the field,

Over seas to the Motherland homage to yield,
They have answered her call in the time of need ;
They will fight for her, die for her, boys of all creed.

Good boys, brave boys, boys of the Western Sphere,
The God of battle be with you all who know no
shrinking fear ;

Some of you may lay down your lives where many
a hero sleeps,

While Canada's heart with pride doth swell, proud
Canada also weeps.

Good boys, brave boys, on to victory ride,
Hand in hand with the Allied bands, remember
 you're Canada's pride;
Your country prays from shore to shore, her cry
 comes far and near,
Unfurl your flags, and for "Our Boys" give cheer,
 cheer, cheer.

REPAY THE BOYS

Girls, what are you going to do,
When our boys come home from the war ?
They are going to look with critical eyes
At what they've been fighting for.

Will they see in your manner, actions and dress,
A reflection of inward grace ?
Or will they see—but God forbid—
What the world calls—going the pace,

You can lift them up, or draw them down,
Their good or bad Angel be,
But answer you must, for this wonderful power
At the bar of Eternity.

Our boys have seen what women can do,
Cruelty, injustice endure,
And it must have stamped on their minds for aye
A love for the good and the pure.

You have bravely done your bit at home ;
Continue the work I pray ;
And help to clean up this wicked world,
For it's badly needed today,

Make homes for the boys—forget about wealth,
The curse of this sordid age—
Remember, 'tis not always the happiest bird
That lives in a gilded cage.

For the heart of a good, true, honest man,
Is the finest thing in the land ;
And the holiest joy a woman can feel,
Is the touch of a wee, wee hand.

OLD SANTA CLAUS

(For the Kiddies)

Old Santa is getting to work again,
And calling his help from afar,
To fetch their tools and their measuring rules,
To make all the things they'll have to leave
All over the world on Christmas eve.
The funniest names his workers possess,
One for each month of the year,
And each one works with a willing hand
For the boy or girl in a far off land,
That was born in his month—how queer !

Though January is young and strong we know,
Yet sometimes he takes a chill,
When up comes June with a nice hot glow
Which is better than any pill;
Poor February is working so hard on a doll,
But the wax in his cold hands won't melt.
Till up comes July with a smile in her eye,
And she sees that her presence is felt.

And August at times feels quite worn out,
But there is March at her side—how nice,
With a little fine breeze that makes her sneeze,
And she's back to her work in a trice.
September and October can work with a will,
For they suffer from neither the heat nor the chill,
The bon-bons they make and the nuts that they crack
To carry would give one a crick in their back.

Really, poor November's too old for work,
Says kind April with tears in her eyes,
Then May does her work with her gentle touch,
And that gives old Nov. a surprise.

Soon December will call them all to stop,
When they've made enough and to spare,
To get ready their harness, their bells and their furs,
For their flight thro the keen frosty air.
The pretty Reindeer we must not forget,
Who are getting so sleek and so strong,
To carry their loads o'er the Mountain roads,
As they hurry their journey along.

Now ye Merry, Merry Men, get all up on the sleigh,
With old Santa Claus, by whose leave
You'll distribute all the toys to the happy girls and
 boys,
Fast asleep on Christmas Eve.

GOOD BYE OLD YEAR

Good bye old year, good bye—or Au revoir may be,
Perchance in some far distant time thy face again
I'll see,

God grant I may in no wise fear to meet thee,
For if thou carry with thee aught that I have done
amiss

To hurt my neighbour or myself, I pray thee as thou
Passest on, to drop those deeds o'er some deep dark
abyss,

To Lethean pool—where ugly deeds forgotten lie,
And reap no harvest but just shrink, and die—
But, if on other hand, thou carriest with thee aught
that

I have done to bless my neighbour or myself, I pray
thee,

Lay those deeds in some fair pleasant and prolific
vale,

Where, watered by the kindly dewes of heaven, they
e'en may grow and

Live, and in good time a harvest of pure kindness
give.

Again, old year, adieu—we part good friends and I
must welcome

Your successor—whose infant face comes creeping
into view,

Revealing lineaments which doth his kinship to
thyself prove true,

God grant our good resolves may better hold to him
than did to you.

Away, away—"Old Father Time" you must obey;
Ah, list

The bells ring in the glad new day !

Entrez, New Year, Entrez.

TO MY THIRD GRANDCHILD
(EDWARD)

Little bond of faithful love,
Riveting earth to heaven above,
Coming fresh from Angel hands,
Helpless—all our love demands.

Did the angels when you left,
Round your pretty shining head,
Weave a web of finest gold,
That they you might always hold ?

True an angel's touch is in
That sweet dimple on your chin,
And a bit of azure blue
Caught your eye when passing through.

Daintiest pink from Sun's repose,
Tinted those sweet tiny toes,
And those hands the roses pressed,
Till they fell on Mother's breast.

TO MY EIGHTEENTH GRANDCHILD
(AILEEN)

Into a wild December night,
A brave wee spirit took its flight,
Away from the heavenly land to roam,
To its earthly nest in a loving home,

Where the sweetest welcome awaited it,
Where two loving hearts it more firmly knit,
And Mother and Daddy and Grannie too,
Are ready to worship this baby new.

Shiny head and eyes so blue,
A bit of heaven came with you,
Which we pray will grow, and grow, and defend
Your lovely life from beginning to end.

AUTUMNS THANKSGIVING

The winds of Autumn whisper loud
The great Creator's praise, and thanks for all
The earth's redundant meed of fruitfulness,
Token of a great Father's greater care
For helpless children of the earth and air.

The rains and sun of Autumn gently sing
A sweet thanksgiving hymn,
Duet of praise and glory to the All Benign
Giver of life and light,
Who cheers the failing spirit of the faithless one,
And crowns the victor ere the race is run.

The glorious tints of Autumn tell the wondrous
 story
Of a mighty friend, who blesses our poor vision,
And doth send a heavenly glimpse of hues,
Which perfect rise at that blest goal
To which our journey lies—Fair Paradise.

SPRING SONG

Good bye wintry wind, good bye frost and snow,
Back to your northern home back, back you go,
Now you have run your race your work is o'er,
Stay—till recalled again on icebound shore.

Spring's gentle breath again floats on the air,
Hieing from southern clime with zephyrs rare,
Waking with softest touch to life and light,
All that white winter has hidden from sight.

The river majestic throws off its cold shroud,
And in ripples and eddies it laughs out aloud,
To see that to nation all nature is true,
And imbibing the sunshine reflects life anew.

The little wood violet looks up with a smile;
All the birds on the bush, which are trying mean-
while
To open their hearts to the soft balmy breeze
Which rustles, and wakes the tall slumbering trees.

Which once wide awake will put on their green dress
And with arms open wide will all nature caress,
And bending their tall heads now hasten to greet,
The little wild flowers which grow at their feet.

The soft pattering rain a lullaby sings,
And birds from afar come with fast fleeting wings,
To join in the chorus, with which the woods ring,
"King Winter is dead !" Our Queen is the Spring !

DATE DUE

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Saunderson, Catherine.

Grannie's twilight verses / by

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